

**MS-543: Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church  
Preservation Association, Inc., Records**

**Collection Number:** MS-543

**Title:** Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association, Inc., Records

**Dates:** 1799-2003

**Creator:** Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church (Greene County, Ohio)

**Summary/Abstract:**

The collection consists of original church records for the Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church, founded in 1799 and one of the earliest congregations in Greene County, Ohio. Records include congregational meeting minutes, membership lists, and cemetery records.

**Quantity/Physical Description:** 1.75 linear feet (5 volumes)

**Language(s):** English

**Repository:**

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092

**Restrictions on Access:** There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

**Restrictions on Use:**

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

**Preferred Citation:**

[Description of item, Date], MS-543, Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association, Inc., Records, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

**Acquisition:**

The collection was donated to Special Collections and Archives, Wright State University Libraries, in December 2013, by Timothy A. Lee, Chairman, on behalf of the Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association, Incorporated.

**Other Finding Aid:**

The finding aid is available on the Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries web site at <https://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collectionguides/files/ms543.pdf>. It is also available in the OhioLINK Finding Aid Repository at <http://ead.ohiolink.edu/xtf-ead/>.

**Processing Information:**

The cover of Church Record Book, Volume 1 (1799-1901), had been split completely in two from top to bottom. It was mended using wheat starch paste and Japanese mending tissue, a method which is reversible.

**Processed by:**

Finding aid written according to DACS standards by Lisa Rickey, December 2018.

**Arrangement:**

The collection of 5 items is arranged by type, then date.

**Biographical/Historical Note:**

Middle Run Church was organized July 27, 1799, by Elders Daniel Clark and James Lee. The charter members were William Birt, Elizabeth Birt, John Buckles, Mary Buckles, Sarah Buckles and William Buckles.

Surnames of early members include Bergdall, Birt, Buckles, Chenoweth, Collins, Davis, Evans, Fox Hartsock, Hess, Hughes, James, John, McGrew, Oseit, Rye, Scott, Seamon, Shambaugh, Smith, Stiles, Stratton, Thomas, Weaver, Williams and Wilson.

The church was organized by a group of Baptists who came to the area prior to 1799. They chose the site for their church on a high hill, overlooking the Middle Run creek, then used for baptisms. The location is at the junction of Middle Run and Bellbrook Roads, between Bellbrook, and Waynesville, Ohio. The church congregation was meeting prior to the formation of the Ohio counties in 1803. Many early members were from Warren County, Greene County, and some from Montgomery County. Many early members who remained here later had family members move west to Indiana and the western states.

The earliest members had come from Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York. Some had been members of the Baptist churches earlier. Some families came north from Losantiville (Cincinnati) and had been at the Columbia Baptist Church there. Middle Run had been a member of the Miami Baptist Association, with churches such as Clearcreek in Warren County, Sugarcreek in Centerville, Ohio, and other various churches as far away as Cincinnati.

In those days, church members would travel to other churches, and stay in the homes of those members. They probably had service at Middle Run once or twice a month in the early days. In later years, there were two church groups who used Middle Run. One group met on the first and third Sunday, the other on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

The designation "Primitive" refers to the "original" version of the King James Bible, which they followed. If it wasn't mentioned in that version, the Middle Run group did not adhere to those teachings. Singing was preferred but no accompaniment. There was no Sunday School and no decoration inside or outside of the church. Ministers were called to serve but were not paid; they were referred to as Elders.

After the original log building, a small brick church was constructed. The third (and present) church building was constructed in 1856.

The Middle Run Church building today is kept pretty much as it was 150 years ago, but there is no congregation. The last two members surrendered the church about 18 years ago. There was no great effort to revive the congregation, although attempts were made. Some wanted to tear the church down. About the same time, a group from the neighborhood, many of whom had ancestors buried in the adjoining cemetery, formed the Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association. This non-profit group, which meets several times a year, now takes care of the church. A small yearly fee to join the group helps for the upkeep of the church, with the current chairperson being Mr. Tim Lee.

The adjoining cemetery is still active today, but has upon average a few burials a year. An early member of the Congregation, Evan Chenoweth, left in his will a provision for the proceeds of his Warren County farm for the upkeep of the cemetery, but not the church. The cemetery, which also dates to 1799, has many old field stones for markers. The oldest readable gravestone is that of ? Martindale, dated 1805. There are three or four readable with 1806 dates. A lot of the early stones have just initials engraved on them.

In 2018, cleaning of some of the oldest gravestones began to make it easier to read them and perhaps be viewed by descendants. Many of the stones were photographed and can be viewed at the Find A Grave website: <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2129591/middle-run-cemetery>. Middle Run was listed as # 4316 in "Ohio Cemeteries" 1803-2003, compiled by the Ohio Genealogical Society.

*With the exception of some minor edits, the above biographical sketch was graciously written and contributed by Greg Wulker, a member of Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association.*

For more information about the current activities of the Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association, visit their web page: <https://www.facebook.com/Middle-Run-Primitive-Baptist-Preservation-Association-128470387249752/>.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The collection consists of original church records for the Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church, founded in 1799 and one of the earliest congregations in Greene County, Ohio. There are four bound volumes of church records, including congregational meeting minutes, membership lists, and cemetery records. Some volumes also include Articles of Faith, Church Covenant, Rules of Decorum, biographical sketches of some members, and lists of trustees. The collection also includes a Holy Bible from 1881. Materials in this collection date from 1799 to 2003.

### **Subject Terms**

#### **Organizations/Corporate Names**

Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church (Greene County, Ohio)

Middle Run Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Association, Inc.

**Places**

Greene County (Ohio) -- Church history

**Subjects (General)**

Primitive Baptists

**Material Types**

Church records

Minutes (administrative records)

Membership lists

## Collection Inventory

*All 5 items are in Box 1.*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>Church Record Book, Volume 1</b>	<b>1799-1901</b>
	Congregational Meeting Minutes	1799 July 27 – 1901 Apr 20
	Names of Church Members (back of volume)	[1799?], 1841, 1886-1900
<b>2</b>	<b>Church Record Book, Volume 2</b>	<b>1899-1968</b>
	Congregational Meeting Minutes	1901 May 18 – 1968 Apr 28
	Cemetery Fund (pages 296-300)	1899
	Roll of Members and Biographical (after page 300) *includes names of some members from earlier time period (circa 1857 onward)	Circa 1975*
<b>3</b>	<b>Church Record Book, Volume 3</b>	<b>1936-1957, 1982-2002</b>
	Articles of Faith, Church Covenant, Rules of Decorum (pages 15-17)	Circa 1936-1940
	Membership List (page 18)	1940 Apr
	Congregational Meeting Minutes (pages 19-138)	1936 Apr 23 – 1957 Aug 25
	Cemetery Lot Sales Records (pages 150-167)	1982-2002
<b>4</b>	<b>Church Record Book, Volume 4</b>	<b>1968-2003</b>
	Articles of Faith, Church Covenant, Rules of Decorum	Circa 1968
	Congregational Meeting Minutes	1968 May 25 – 2003 July 27
	Membership Roll (back of volume)	Circa 1968-2002*

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
	*includes names of some members from earlier time period (circa 1860 onward)  Trustees List (inside back cover)	1995-2002
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments Translated out of the Original Tongues with Marginal References (Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis: Cranston and Stowe)</i></b>	<b>1881</b>
	Tucked into front of Bible: Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum (typescript)	Undated